

# Mobile: The rising star of emerging markets

By [Carmen Murray](#), issued by [Mbbtainment](#) 23 Nov 2015

It is no secret, that for a considerable time, all eyes have been on Africa. We have seen exponential growth in mobile penetration and mobile innovation. Globally, nations have been paying attention to Africans to see how they are solving African problems and driving monumental change in mobile.



Carmen Murray

Recently, for a slightly different reason, South Africa has captured the attention of the international community, where one of the biggest discoveries of humankind was made October 2013, and announced to the world on 10 September 2015.

**Homo Naledi** - our new human ancestor, named after the Rising Star Cave, "Naledi" that means "Star" in Sesotho. Fossils were found of at least fifteen individuals, amounting to 1550 specimens, and have been excavated from the Rising Star Cave System. **(Reference Wikipedia)** This is a massive step forward for the human race, to show that evolution did exist.

This brings me to today's subject, the Rising Star of the emerging markets - mobile. I want to go back to the roots of emerging market and encourage you to look at the challenges it serves and see how you can impact change within your organisation. I also want to share a few case studies to look at how brands rise and shine, by helping to solve problems in Africa and using mobile as the vehicle to drive the message to the consumer, as it's the closest you can get to your consumer - I would like to call it "Naledi marketing".



Living in a third world country has its own set of problems, these challenges are hard to ignore. For the mass market, it has a significant impact on the consumer's standard of living. Some of the big challenges we see in emerging markets are: education, poverty, health, high unemployment rates, small percentage of upper class, large foreign debt, high infant mortality, devalued currency. Many will pose this as a threat, but the way to look at it is *big challenges, bigger opportunities*. In each one of these challenges, if you dig deep enough, and look at the true human insight, this could be a groundbreaking way for brands to go back to their roots and align brand values that can serve the people.

A topic that continuously came up during the Cannes Lions Festival was all about brands with purpose and how these brands

are shining because they are driving impact by making a stand with social activism. Research shows us that the fastest growing brands are those who serve a higher purpose and are building deeper bonds with their consumers because they fighting for a cause.

I would like to share two examples with you of how brands have understood that in reaching out to the mass market, mobile plays a key role and how big ideas can live in a mobile home. A true way to rise and shine in an emerging market.

**Case Study 1: Mom Connect:** Mom Connect is an initiative that was put in place by the Department of Health in South Africa, in order for pregnant woman to register their pregnancy for free on a USSD (**Star - Dialling**) and where they can receive regular updates on the stages of their pregnancy to educate women and to drive routine medical check ups, but a for them to better understand the health services available to them. Interviews conducted with some nurses highlighted that helping women, nurses were saving a lot of time through the rest of the woman's pregnancy. Women were less likely to cc to the clinic unnecessarily and were more empowered which enabled them to ask specific questions regarding their pregnancy.

An African Proverb - "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation

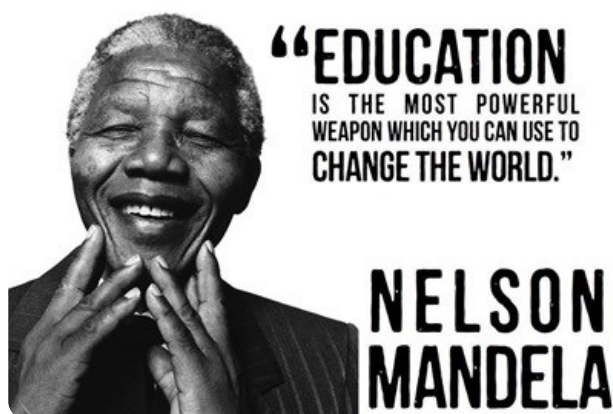
References: <http://www.ngopulse.org/blogs/mom-connect-journey-pregnancy-made-secure>

**Case Study 2: Omo Fast Kids Maths:** South Africa has one of the lowest ratings for maths education in the world. South Africa came under the spotlight after a World Economic Forum global competitiveness report revealed South Africa came last out of 144 countries - for mathematics and science teaching. *"The intention is to further complement the efforts of educators to address the critical skills gap in our country in terms of producing future generations of individuals that are proficient in maths," said Andrew Mysell, Omo Marketing Manager at Unilever.*"

Omo created a mobile app and it uses a virtual reward mechanism to encourage regular engagement and user effort. Through this all children can practice their math skills, and tokens are earned and used to gain vouchers and coupons. The first 30 days were free, but for further access to OMO Fast Kids Maths, specially-marked Omo Packs can be purchased.

*References: The Mobile Marketing Association of South Africa's Annual Digest 2015*

In closing, "Naledi marketing" is all about identifying key socio-economic challenges that affect the mass market and using mobile as the vehicle to drive positive change, where it is easily accessible, and help shape the world in a positive way. We want to encourage you to find the challenges in Africa, and how you can use your brands/business to drive change, and influence people, and use this as a way to stand out from your competitors and be heard by your consumers. A wise man once said:



Mobitainment, was the first African company to win a Mobile Marketing Association Award back in 2009, and has become one of the longest and most consistently international mobile marketing award winner in Africa with wins for the last eight years!

It earned the title of Organisation of the Year 2013 from the Direct Marketing Association at the Assegai Awards, showing how Direct Marketing is seeing the importance of mobile in the marketing mix.

For any enquiries how Mobitainment can assist you to put a mobile strategy together for you, please email me on [carmen@mobitainment.co.za](mailto:carmen@mobitainment.co.za).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carmen Murray is the GM Sales and Marketing at Mobitainment SA. She is a passionate entrepreneur who has been an active force in developing strategies for global and local brands across diverse industries in SA, and extending into Africa.

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